

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**  
**MINORITY BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY CENTER PROGRAM**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- **Federal Agency Name(s):** Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), Department Of Commerce
- **Funding Opportunity Title:** Minority Business Opportunity Center (MBOC) Program.
- **Announcement Type:** Initial Announcement
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA):** 11.803 Minority Business Opportunity Center Program (formerly Minority Business Opportunity Committee Program)
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** In accordance with Executive Order 11625 and 15 U.S.C. § 1512, MBDA is soliciting competitive applications from eligible organizations to operate Minority Business Opportunity Centers (MBOCs) in the following locations and geographical service areas:

<b>Name of MBOC</b>	<b>Location of MBOC</b>	<b>MBOC Geographical Service Area</b>
Alabama MBOC	Mobile, AL	State of Alabama
Chicago MBOC	Chicago, IL	State of Illinois
Florida MBOC	Orlando, FL	State of Florida
Gary MBOC	Gary, IN	State of Indiana
Los Angeles MBOC	Los Angeles, CA	County of Los Angeles, CA
New Orleans MBOC	New Orleans, LA	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, LA MSA**
Washington, DC MBOC	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV MSA**	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV MSA**
Wisconsin MBOC	Milwaukee, WI	State of Wisconsin

\*\* Metropolitan Statistical Area, please see OMB Bulletin No.07-01, Update of Statistical Area Definitions and Guidance on Their Uses (December 18, 2006) at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/bulletins>.

MBDA currently funds a network of eight (8) MBOC projects located across the United States. MBOC projects provide technical assistance and brokering services to eligible minority business enterprises (MBEs), with an emphasis on firms with \$500,000 or more in annual revenues or firms with “rapid growth potential” (collectively, the “Strategic Growth Initiative” or “SGI” firms). In addition, MBOCs provide access to procurement and financing opportunities within the public and

private sectors. MBOC operators and executive directors should have experience in and knowledge of the local minority business sector and demonstrated ability to access key decision makers. MBOCs are supported by a volunteer advisory committee that assists the MBOC in implementing program requirements and providing contract and financing opportunities to MBEs. Specific performance requirements and metrics are used by MBDA to evaluate each project and are a key component of the MBOC Program. The MBOC Program's primary evaluation criterion is the dollar value of contracts and financial transactions awarded to MBEs. *See* Section I.C., Program Work Requirements and Section I.E., Minimum Performance Goals, of this Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) for applicable programmatic requirements.

For-profit entities (including sole proprietorships, partnerships and corporations), non-profit organizations, state and local government entities, American Indian Tribes and educational institutions are eligible to operate MBOCs. Applicants should have an established presence in the applicable MBOC geographical service area identified above.

The total award period for projects funded under this competitive solicitation is expected to be three (3) years, with financial assistance awards for each project anticipated to range from \$162,500 to \$375,000 for each of the three (3) program years (including the minimum 20% non-federal cost share). Projects will be funded for no more than one (1) program year at a time. Projects will not compete for funding in subsequent program years within the approved award period; however, operators that fail to achieve a "satisfactory" or better performance rating for the preceding program year may be denied second- or third-year funding. Applicants are hereby given notice that FY 2008 funds have not yet been appropriated for this program. *See* Section II.A., Funding Availability, Award Period and Renewals, for additional funding information.

**In order to receive consideration under this competitive solicitation, applicants must comply with all information and requirements contained in this FFO. NOTE: This is not a grant program to help start a business. Applications submitted must be to operate a MBOC and to provide business assistance services to eligible minority-owned firms as set forth in this FFO. Applications which do not meet these requirements will be rejected. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that applications are complete and timely received by MBDA.**

- **Dates:** The closing date for receipt of applications is **January 18, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST)**. To be considered timely: (i) paper applications must be received by the MBDA representative at the address set forth in Section IV.D., Addresses for Application Submissions, by the closing date and time; or (ii) electronic applications must be transmitted and time-stamped at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) by the closing date and time. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered. Anticipated time for processing awards is sixty (60) days from the

closing date for receipt of applications. MBDA anticipates that MBOC awards under this competitive solicitation will be made with a start date of April 1, 2008.

- **Application Submission and Evaluation:** Applications may be submitted in paper format to MBDA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. or may be submitted electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). See Section IV., Application and Submission Information, and Section V., Application Review Information, for detailed information.
- **Pre-Application Conference:** In connection with this competitive solicitation, a pre-application teleconference will be held on **December 18, 2007** at 1:00 pm (EST). Interested persons may participate in-person or by telephone. Advance registration is required by all participants. See Section IV.E., Pre-Application Conference, for advance registration requirements.
- **Contacts and Additional Information:** Please refer to Section VII., Agency Contacts, for MBDA points of contact. For further information and to view sample application information on the MBOC Program, please visit MBDA's Minority Business Internet Portal at [www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov).

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## FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

### I. **Funding Opportunity Description**

#### A. **Introduction**

In accordance with Executive Order 11625 and 15 U.S.C. § 1512, MBDA is soliciting competitive applications from eligible organizations to operate a Minority Business Opportunity Center (MBOC) in the following geographical service areas:

<b>Name of MBOC</b>	<b>Location of MBOC</b>	<b>MBOC Geographical Service Area</b>
Alabama MBOC	Mobile, AL	State of Alabama
Chicago MBOC	Chicago, IL	State of Illinois
Florida MBOC	Orlando, FL	State of Florida
Gary MBOC	Gary, IN	State of Indiana
Los Angeles MBOC	Los Angeles, CA	County of Los Angeles, CA
New Orleans MBOC	New Orleans, LA	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, LA MSA**
Washington, DC MBOC	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV MSA**	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV MSA**
Wisconsin MBOC	Milwaukee, WI	State of Wisconsin

\*\* Metropolitan Statistical Area, please see OMB Bulletin No.07-01, Update of Statistical Area Definitions and Guidance on Their Uses (December 18, 2006) at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/bulletins>.

A MBOC operator is responsible for providing services to eligible clients within the specified geographical service area. In some cases, the geographical distance may be cost-prohibitive for the MBOC to conduct in-person meetings with clients. MBDA anticipates the MBOC would provide, to the best of its abilities, services to those firms beyond a reasonable distance through virtual communications, including but not limited to telephone, email and facsimile. Service to eligible clients outside of an operator's specified service area may be requested, on a case-by-case basis, through the Federal Program Officer and is subject to approval by the Grants Officer.

#### B. **Program Objectives**

MBDA is the only Federal agency created specifically to foster the establishment and growth of minority business enterprises (MBEs). MBDA actively promotes the strategic growth and expansion of MBEs by offering management and technical assistance through a nationwide network of over 40 business opportunity and enterprise centers.

The MBOC Program is a key component of MBDA's overall business development assistance program and promotes the growth and competitiveness of "eligible minority-

owned businesses.” For this purpose, businesses that are owned or controlled by the following persons or groups of persons are eligible to receive business assistance services under the MBOC Program: African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Spanish-speaking Americans, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, Native Americans (including Alaska Natives, Alaska Native Corporations and tribal entities), Eskimos, Aleuts, Asian Indians, and Hasidic Jews. *See* 15 CFR § 1400.1 and Executive Order 11625.

The Agency’s long term goal of achieving entrepreneurial parity for MBEs is the benchmark by which MBDA’s critical Federal government role is measured. A new paradigm for minority business development requires that the public and private sectors expand their present focus on outreach, certification and dollars spent to include enabling MBEs to achieve size, scale and scope, and access to technology and capital. Minority business development services must therefore be designed to create sustainable business values, which translate into entrepreneurial parity and strategic growth for MBEs through increased gross receipts, number of employees, and overall size and capacity.

### **C. Program Work Requirements**

MBOC projects provide business assistance and brokering services to eligible MBEs, with an emphasis on those firms with \$500,000 or more in annual revenues or those “rapid growth potential” firms capable of creating significant employment and long-term economic impact (collectively, the “Strategic Growth Initiative” or “SGI” firms). MBOCs also provide access to procurement and financing opportunities with the public and private sectors. MBOCs are supported by a volunteer advisory committee that assists the MBOC in implementing program requirements and providing contract and financing opportunities to MBEs. The MBOC Program’s primary evaluation criteria is the dollar value of contracts and financial transactions awarded to MBEs, although the MBOC will be required to engage in the activities and fulfill the performance requirements set forth in Appendix A, Work and Training Requirements, of this FFO.

The MBOC is a service-based program and the MBOC operator is encouraged (but is not required to) charge client fees for services rendered. If client fees are proposed by the applicant, the fees must be applied to the program’s non-federal cost share requirement and used in furtherance of authorized program activities. The MBOC Program further incorporates an entrepreneurial approach to building market stability and improving the quality of client services. This entrepreneurial strategy expands the reach of the MBOCs by requiring project operators to develop and build upon its advisory committee and strategic alliances with public and private sector partners as a means of serving minority-owned firms within each MBOC’s geographical service area. The MBOC Program is also designed to effectively leverage MBDA resources, including but not limited to: MBDA Office of Business Development and MBDA National Enterprise Centers; MBDA’s Business Internet Portal; and MBDA’s nationwide network of Native American Business Enterprise Centers (NABECs), Minority Business Enterprise Centers (MBECs) and other Minority Business Opportunity Centers. MBOC operators are also required to attend a variety of MBDA training programs designed to increase operational efficiencies and the provision of value-added client services.



MBOC operators are generally required to provide the following client services:

1. Facilitate the Award of Contract and Financial Transactions to MBEs – The successful applicant must implement a process that results in the award of contract and financial transactions to MBE clients by means of:
  - a) Development and maintenance of database/listing of viable MBEs;
  - b) Development and maintenance of a database/listing of potential contracts, subcontracts and financial opportunities;
  - c) Establishment of client relationships; and
  - d) Brokering of contracts, subcontracts and financial transactions for award to MBEs.
2. Advisory Committee and Subcommittees – Each MBOC must establish an advisory committee that should be comprised of public and private sector executives and key decision makers. The Advisory Committee is a volunteer group and is a significant component of the MBOCs business development and program implementation strategies. The Advisory Committee assists the MBOC staff in identifying upcoming contract and financing opportunities for MBEs.
3. Program and Advocacy – The MBOC is required to promote its activities within the business community it serves and advocate the use of minority businesses among proposed business sectors and organizations.

Over the past several years MBDA has developed a variety of new technology tools designed to leverage information technology to assist the minority business community. The Agency uses a high-speed network strategy that links all of its funded projects into a single virtual organization. The goal of MBDA is to allow all funded projects to have access to this technology through the MBDA Business Portal ([www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov)). See Section II.C.3., Network, Tools and Information Exchange, for a sampling of the technologies and business tools available to support the MBOC Program.

**See Appendix A, Work and Training Requirements, for the full range of work and training requirements under the MBOC Program.**

#### **D. Program Performance Measures and Performance Ratings**

##### **1. Performance Measures**

The program performance of each MBOC is evaluated by MBDA based on specific performance elements, which are assigned weighted values. MBOC operators will be awarded points with respect to each performance element through defined work activities that lead to successful client outcomes. Specifically, performance points are awarded by MBDA in proportion to the operator's achievement of the performance goals set forth in the application and incorporated into the terms and condition of the award.

**See Appendix B, Performance Measures and Related Definitions, for a listing of the MBOC performance measures and related definitions.**

## **2. Performance Ratings**

The MBOC operator will be assigned a performance rating by MBDA for each program period based on the below rating system and needs to achieve an overall “satisfactory” (or better) performance rating for each program period.

MBOC performance for Year One, Year Two and Year Three of the award period will be based on the following rating system:

<b>YEAR ONE PERFORMANCE RATINGS</b>		
<b>Minimum Required Percent of Goals Needed For Each Rating Category</b>	<b>Minimum Required Points Needed for Each Rating Category</b>	<b>Rating Categories Rating Category</b>
100.0% and above+	100.0++ & above	Outstanding
At least 90.0%	90.0 – 99.9	Commendable
At least 80.0%	80.0 – 89.9	Good
At least 75.0%	75.0 – 79.9	Satisfactory
74.9% or below	74.9 or below	Unsatisfactory
+Not to exceed 118.5%		
++Not to exceed 118.5 Points		

<b>YEAR TWO PERFORMANCE RATINGS</b>		
<b>Minimum Required Percent of Goals Needed for Each Rating Category</b>	<b>Minimum Required Points Needed for Each Rating Category</b>	<b>Rating Categories Rating Category</b>
100.0% and above+	100.0++ & above	Outstanding
At least 92.8%	92.8 – 99.9	Commendable
At least 85.4%	85.4 – 92.7	Good
At least 78.0%	78.0 – 85.3	Satisfactory
77.9% or below	77.9 or below	Unsatisfactory
+Not to exceed 118.5%		
++Not to exceed 118.5 Points		

<b>YEAR THREE PERFORMANCE RATINGS</b>		
<b>Minimum Required Percent of Goals Needed for Each Rating Category</b>	<b>Minimum Required Points Needed for Each Rating Category</b>	<b>Rating Categories Rating Category</b>
100.0% and above+	100.0++ & above	Outstanding
At least 93.4%	93.4 – 99.9	Commendable
At least 86.7%	86.7 – 93.3	Good
At least 80.0%	80.0 – 86.6	Satisfactory
79.9% or below	79.9 or below	Unsatisfactory

+Not to exceed 118.5%		
++Not to exceed 118.5 Points		

### **E. Minimum Performance Goals**

The below table provides the minimum performance requirements for each MBOC project for each program year. Applicants must propose performance goals for each project year (and in each category) that equal or exceed the performance goals listed below.

While applicants are encouraged to propose performance goals in excess of the minimum requirements, such goals will be incorporated into the MBDA award and will thereafter constitute the MBOC operator's minimum performance requirements. Thus, applicants should carefully consider the feasibility of performance goals proposed in the application.

	Alabama MBOC	Chicago MBOC	Florida MBOC	Gary MBOC	Louisiana MBOC	Los Angeles MBOC	Washington MBOC	Wisconsin MBOC
1. Total Value of Transactions Awarded	\$38,122,500	\$114,954,000	\$78,200,000	\$47,780,000	\$76,245,000	\$117,300,000	\$114,954,000	\$47,780,000
1a) Dollar Value of Awarded Contracts and Procurements**	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant
1b) Dollar Value of Awarded Financial Transactions **	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant	To Be Proposed by Applicant
2. Number of Clients Served	37	120	80	52	74	120	120	52
3. Number of Clients Receiving Transactions	2	13	9	8	8	13	13	2
4. Number of Jobs Created	21	60	40	26	42	60	60	26
5. Partnerships	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6. Resource Entries	48	113	75	48	48	113	113	48
7. Facilitated Matches	2	13	9	6	4	13	13	6

\*\* Total Value of Transactions Awarded (Item 1) is the sum of the Dollar Value of Awarded Contracts and Procurements (Item 1a), plus the Dollar Value of Awarded Financial Transactions (Item 1b). Applicants may propose specific performance goals for

each of these sub-categories within the following parameters: (a) the Dollar Value of Awarded Contracts and Procurements must be no more than 60% and no less than 40% of the Total Value of Transactions Awarded; and (b) the Dollar Value of Awarded Financial Transactions must be no less than 40% and no more than 60% of the Total Value of Transactions Awarded. The combined total of these two sub-categories must equal 100% of the Total Value of Transactions Awarded.

#### **F. Information Technology and Computer Requirements**

MBDA requires that all award recipients meet certain requirements relating to the acquisition, installation, configuration, maintenance and security of information technology (IT) assets in order to ensure seamless and productive interface between and among all grant recipients, minority-owned businesses, the MBDA Federal IT system and the public. The basic components of the required IT enterprise system are the desktop workstations, the server, local area network (LAN) components and a connection to the Internet.

**See Appendix C, Information Technology and Computer Requirements, for a listing of the required information technology assets and their required configuration.**

#### **G. Funding Priorities**

Preference may be given during the selection process to applications which address the following MBDA funding priorities:

1. Proposals that include performance goals that exceed by 10% or more the minimum performance goal requirements set forth in this FFO;
2. Applicants who are headquartered and demonstrate an exceptional ability and leadership in identifying and working towards the elimination of barriers which limit the access of minority businesses to markets and capital in the applicable MBOC geographical service area;
3. Applicants who demonstrate an exceptional ability to identify and work with minority firms seeking to obtain large-scale contracts and/or insertion into supply chains with institutional customers;
4. Proposals that utilize fee for service models and those that use innovative approaches to charging and collecting fees from clients;
5. Proposals that take a regional approach in providing services to eligible clients;
6. Proposals from applicants with an existing client database in the applicable MBOC geographical service area that exceeds by 50% or more the applicable annual performance goal for the minimum number of clients served; or
7. Proposals that demonstrate an ability to establish an MBOC that has an industry specific focus and that demonstrate the leveraging of one or more economic clusters, including but not limited to aerospace, manufacturing, construction, financial services, information technology and automotive industries.

## **II. Award Information**

### **A. Funding Availability, Award Period and Renewals**

MBDA anticipates that a total of approximately \$1,750,000 will be available in each of FYs 2008 - 2010 to fund financial assistance awards for the eight (8) MBOC projects referenced in this competitive solicitation. The total award period for awards made under this competitive solicitation is anticipated to be three (3) years and all awards are expected to be made with a start date of April 1, 2008. The anticipated amount of the financial assistance award for each MBOC project (including the minimum 20% non-federal cost share) is set forth in the below table and is anticipated to range from \$162,500 to \$375,000 for each of the three (3) project years (actual award amounts may vary depending on the availability of appropriated funds). MBOC funding levels are generally based on the size and ranking of the minority firms as established by MBDA and U.S. Census Bureau data and upon other available research and data.

Applicants must submit project plans and budgets for each of the three (3) program years under the award (April 1, 2008 – March 31, 2009, April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010 and April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2011). Projects will be funded for no more than one program year at a time. Project operators will not compete for funding in subsequent program years within the approved award period. However, operators that fail to achieve a “satisfactory” or better performance rating for the preceding program year may be denied second- or third-year funding (as the case may be). Recommendations for second- and third-year funding are generally evaluated by MBDA based on a mid-year performance rating and/or combination of mid-year and cumulative third quarter performance ratings. In making such funding recommendations, MBDA and the Department of Commerce will consider the facts and circumstances of each case, such as but not limited to market conditions, most recent performance of the operator and other mitigating factors.

Applicants are hereby given notice that FY 2008 funds have not yet been appropriated for this program. Accordingly, MBDA issues this notice subject to the appropriations made available under the current continuing resolution, H.J. Res. 52, “Making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes,” Public Law 110-92, as amended by H.R. 3222, Public Law 110-116. In no event will MBDA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if this program fails to receive funding or is cancelled because of other MBDA or Department of Commerce priorities. All funding periods are subject to the availability of funds to support the continuation of the project and the Department of Commerce and MBDA priorities. Publication of this FFO does not obligate the Department of Commerce or MBDA to award any specific cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds.

The maximum Federal funding amount and minimum non-federal matching share for each MBOC project for each program year is set forth in the below table. **NOTE: The MBOC Program requires a minimum non-federal cost share of 20%, which must be reflected in the proposed project budget and supporting documentation.** See Section III.B., Non-Federal Cost Sharing Requirements, and the proposed budget and budget

narrative requirements set forth in Appendix D., Section C.4., Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative, for additional information.

Project Name	April 1, 2008 through March 31, 2009			April 1, 2009 through March 31, 2010			April 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011		
	Total Cost (\$)	Federal Share (\$)	Non- Federal Share (\$) (20% min.)	Total Cost (\$)	Federal Share (\$)	Non- Federal Share (\$) (20% min.)	Total Cost (\$)	Federal Share (\$)	Non- Federal Share (\$) (20% min.)
Alabama MBOC	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500
Chicago MBOC	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000
Florida MBOC	250,000	200,000	50,000	250,000	200,000	50,000	250,000	200,000	50,000
Gary MBOC	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500
Los Angeles MBOC	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000
Louisiana MBOC	325,000	260,000	65,000	325,000	260,000	65,000	325,000	260,000	65,000
Washington DC MBOC	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000	375,000	300,000	75,000
Wisconsin MBOC	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500	162,500	130,000	32,500

## **B. Type of Funding Instrument**

Financial assistance awards in the form of cooperative agreements will be used to fund the MBOC Program.

## **C. MBDA Involvement**

MBDA shall maintain substantial involvement with the recipient throughout the award period. MBDA will perform the following duties to further the objectives of the MBOC Program:

### **1. Post-Award Conference**

MBDA shall conduct a mandatory post-award conference for all new MBOC awards to help ensure that each MBOC operator has a clear understanding of the program and its components. During the post-award conference, MBDA will provide an MBDA Directory of Business Resources; orient MBOC program officers; explain program reporting requirements and procedures; identify available resources that can enhance the capabilities of the MBOC; and provide detailed information about MBDA's Business Internet Portal and other information systems.

## **2. Training**

MBDA shall conduct various qualitative training sessions for the MBOC staff (subject to the availability of funds and training resources). The training sessions are mandatory, except where otherwise indicated, and are designed in large part to improve communications, understandings, client service delivery, performance and reporting.

The MBOC training requirements are set forth in Appendix A., Work and Training Requirements. The MBOC applicant is required to allocate appropriate personnel and funds to support all training programs (as noted).

## **3. Network, Tools and Information Exchange**

MBDA shall provide access through its Business Internet Portal ([www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov)) to various technologies and business development tools intended to help streamline the process of delivery of client services are to promote the consistency of services provided by operators throughout the MBDA network of funded projects. MBDA strongly encourages the regular use of these tools, which include but are not limited to the following:

- Phoenix/Opportunity – An electronic bid and supplier matching system that alerts participating minority-owned firms of contract and teaming opportunities directly via e-mail. Procurement leads are transmitted to registered firms on a targeted basis according to the company's industry classification and geographic market.
- Resource Locator – A software application that allows MBEs to search for business resources interactively on the Internet. The resource locator can help minority-owned firms identify trade associations representing their industries, government licensing and permit offices, management and technical assistance providers, and a host of other resources quickly and efficiently.
- Capital Locator – An Internet-based tool that allows MBOC consultants to inquire, identify and locate potential financiers nearest to them. This tool provides basic financing criteria for each identified capital resource and is designed to give users the benefit of a nationwide market for identifying financing needs and products.
- Business and Market Planning – A software package designed to streamline and enhance the development of business plans, marketing plans and other strategic business documents.

## **4. Project Support**

MBDA expects to further support the MBOC Program by:

- Facilitating mentoring relationships between new and incumbent project operators;
- Hosting one national and at least one NEC training conference;
- Expanding the Phoenix data bank of minority-owned firms;

- Facilitating the exchange of business opportunity information within the MBDA funded system using the Capital Locator, Resource Locator, Phoenix and Opportunity systems, such as federal, state and local governments and private sector market opportunities for MBOC clients;
- Working closely with the MBOCs to establish a system in which procurement and contract opportunities can be shared with the network of MBOCs. This system will include opportunities identified throughout the MBDA network using the Phoenix and Opportunity system;
- Promoting special events to be scheduled at the local community, state and national levels in celebration of MBDA's annual Minority Enterprise Development (MED)Week Conference; and
- Promoting collaborations between the MBOCs and the MBDA Office of Business Development.
- Providing general program information, guidance and support as well as a help line for questions related to the MBDA Performance System.
- Providing client and strategic support through the respective NEC and the use of the business analyst geographic information system; a software designed to provide strategic business data through a geographically-based information system.

## **5. Project Monitoring and Advisement**

MBDA will systematically monitor the performance of each MBOC, as provided under the operational quality performance measure (*see* Appendix B, Performance Measures and Related Definitions). This monitoring includes regular review of data input to the MBDA Performance Reporting System.

MBDA will conduct performance assessments in each program year for the mid-year performance period (April 1 – September 30) and cumulative year-end performance period (April 1 – March 31). These assessments are based on the MBOC's timely submission of its required Narrative Reports.

MBDA will also conduct desk assessments of the Center's performance. These assessments are based on the information entered into the Performance system by the Center, which are generally required within 72 hours of assisting clients (*see* Appendix A., Section D.5., Operational Quality). MBDA will conduct two desk assessments for each program year: (a) the first quarter period of (April 1- June 30); and (b) the cumulative third quarter performance period (April 1 – December 31). All data recorded in the MBDA Performance System shall be reviewed and analyzed. MBDA shall provide a written report of its findings and determinations.

MBDA will conduct an initial and/or annual on-site review of the MBOC to verify the Center's performance/claims, including but not limited to a review of client files, client fees (if proposed), cost share requirements and overall operations. MBDA may also conduct a review of reported assistance by interviewing the clients assisted by the Center.



MBDA will assess the Center's effectiveness in providing business development services to the minority business community in the applicable geographical service area. MBDA will provide the operator with a report of findings and recommendations for improvement as a result of evaluations and monitoring visits. MBDA will approve qualifications of key MBOC staff (*see* Appendix A, Section B.1, MBOC Executive Director and Key Staff) and respond in a timely manner to correspondence requesting MBDA action.

MBDA may, upon unsuccessful performance by an MBOC, conduct an MBOC consultation. This consultation (which may be referred to as an advisement) is designed to assist a failing Center through collaborative support. The MBOC may be required to develop a performance improvement plan based on MBDA's findings, suggestions and recommendations.

### **III. Eligibility Information**

#### **A. Eligible Applicants**

For-profit entities (including but not limited to sole-proprietorships, partnerships, limited liability companies and corporations), non-profit organizations, state and local government entities, American Indian Tribes and educational institutions are eligible to operate MBOCs.

#### **B. Non-Federal Cost Sharing Requirements**

**The MBOC Program requires a minimum non-federal cost share of 20%, which must be reflected in the proposed project budget.** Non-federal cost share is the portion of the project cost not borne by the Federal Government.

Applicants must satisfy the non-federal cost sharing requirements in one or more of the following four (4) means or in any combination thereof: (1) client fees (optional); (2) applicant cash contributions; (3) applicant in-kind (*i.e.*, non-cash) contributions; or (4) third-party in-kind contributions.

**The MBOC may, but is not required to charge client fees for services rendered, although MBDA encourages the applicant to implement a fee-for-service program.** If client fees are proposed, the applicant must implement the below process for determining fee structures. The applicant may, however, provide its preferred methodology for the billing and collection of client fees, as well as for fee waivers.

The MBOC client fees (if proposed) must range from \$10 to \$60 per hour based on the gross receipts of the client's business ranging from \$0 to \$5 million and above. The following policy restrictions apply when charging client service fees: (1) client fees charged for one-on-one assistance must be based on a rate of \$100 per hour; and (2) the MBOC must set fee rates based on the following chart:

<b>Gross Receipts Of Client</b>	<b>Base Rate for Services Rendered</b>	<b>Percent of Cost Borne by Client</b>	<b>Client Fee Per Hour</b>
\$0 – 99,999	\$100.00	10%	\$10.00
\$100,000 – 299,999	\$100.00	20%	\$20.00
\$300,000 – 999,999	\$100.00	30%	\$30.00
\$1 Million – 2,999,999	\$100.00	40%	\$40.00
\$3 Million – 4,999,999	\$100.00	50%	\$50.00
\$5 Million and Above	\$100.00	60%	\$60.00

**NOTE:** Client fees must be applied directly to the award's non-federal cost share and must be used in furtherance of authorized program activities. In addition, the MBOC operator will generally be required to contribute cash to the award with respect to uncollected client fees that were included as part of the non-federal cost share committed to the award.

#### **IV. Application and Submission Information**

**Applications may be submitted in either paper format OR electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).**

##### **A. Address to Request Application Package**

Paper application packages may be obtained by contacting the specified MBDA National Enterprise Center (NEC) for the geographic service area (*see* Section VII, Agency Contacts) in which the project will be located or by accessing the MBDA Minority Business Internet Portal at [www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov). Standard forms (SF) may be obtained by (1) contacting MBDA as described above; or (2) by accessing <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants> or <http://www.Grants.gov>. Department of Commerce (CD) forms may be accessed at [www.doc.gov/forms](http://www.doc.gov/forms).

If an applicant files electronically, all application materials and forms are available at the Grants.gov website (<http://www.Grants.gov>), with the exception of the Form CD-346. *See* Section IV.B.3. (Electronic Submissions) below for instructions on submitting the Form CD-346 with an electronic application.

##### **B. Content and Form of Application**

###### **1. General Requirements**

In general, the applicant's proposal must define how it will implement the MBOC work requirements and achieve the performance goals set forth in this FFO. A complete proposal consists of a detailed program narrative with defined sections and certain Standard Forms (SF) and Department of Commerce (CD) forms. The requirements are the same regardless of whether the proposal is filed in paper format or electronically. Applicants must submit a separate application for each MBOC project for which it is applying.

<p><b>The required content and format for submitting applications is set forth in Appendix D., Content and Form of Application</b></p>
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## **2. Paper Submission**

A completed proposal may be submitted by: (i) postal mail; (ii) overnight delivery; or (iii) hand-delivery to the address specified in Section IV.D., Addresses for Application Submissions.

**Failure to include, by the deadline, a signed, original SF-424 with the paper application will result in the application being rejected and returned to the applicant. Failure to sign and submit the REMAINING FORMS with the paper application by the deadline will automatically cause an application to lose two (2) points in the overall score. Failure to submit other documents or information required may also adversely affect an applicant's overall score.**

## **3. Electronic Submission**

Applicants are encouraged to submit their proposal electronically at <http://www.grants.gov>. Electronic submissions should be made in accordance with the instructions available at Grants.gov (see <http://www.Grants.gov/ForApplicants> for detailed information).

The requirements for electronic submission are generally the same as for paper submission, except that scanned signatures are acceptable. The preferred format for electronic attachments is .pdf. Files in this format may be read by most computers using free reader software. This is the most prevalent format for documents that are scanned from hard-copy. However, the Department will accept electronic files in Word, Wordperfect, Lotus or Excel formats.

**NOTE:** The Form CD-346 is not available within the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) application package. However, it may be accessed and downloaded at [www.doc.gov/forms](http://www.doc.gov/forms). The Form CD-346 should be completed and attached to the electronic application. An original signature copy of the Form CD-346 will be required before an award will be made to the successful applicant.

**Failure to submit a complete application by the submission deadline will result in the application being rejected by Grants.gov. [An electronic application cannot be submitted through Grants.gov unless all required fields on all required forms are completed.] Failure to submit other documents or information by the deadline, which does not result in the rejection of an application by Grants.gov, may affect an applicant's overall score.**

## **C. Submission Deadline**

The closing date for receipt of applications is **January 18, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST)**. The submission deadline is the same for paper and electronic

applications. To be considered timely: (i) paper applications must be received by the MBDA representative at the address set forth in Section IV.D. (Addresses for Application Submissions) by the closing date and time; or (ii) electronic applications must be transmitted and time-stamped at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) by the closing date and time. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered. Anticipated time for processing awards is sixty (60) days from the closing date for receipt of applications. MBDA anticipates that MBOC awards under this competitive solicitation will be made with a start date of April 1, 2008.

The electronic submission date is the date that applications will be deemed to have been submitted electronically and shall be the date and time received at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Applicants should save and print the proof of submission they receive from [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). *Applicants should plan to submit the application electronically several days before the deadline to ensure that the application is complete and accepted by grants.gov before the submission deadline.* If problems occur while using Grants.gov, the applicant is advised to (i) print any error message received, and (ii) call Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. MBDA may allow more time for applicant submission due to system problems at Grants.gov that are beyond the control of the applicant.

**MBDA shall not accept any changes, additions, revisions or deletions to competitive applications after the submission deadline. However, MBDA may contact applicants to request clarification of the application following the review and evaluation process.**

#### **D. Addresses for Application Submissions**

##### **1. Paper Submission – If Mailed**

If the application is mailed/shipped overnight by the applicant or its representative, one (1) signed original, plus two (2) copies of the application, must be mailed to the address below. Applicants are encouraged to also submit an electronic copy of the proposal, budget and budget narrative on a CD-ROM to facilitate the processing of applications.

Office of Business Development – MBOC Program  
Office of Executive Secretariat, HCHB Room 5063  
Minority Business Development Agency  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20230

MBDA's receipt of mail sent via the United States Postal Service may be substantially delayed or suspended in delivery due to security measures. Applicants may therefore wish to use a guaranteed overnight delivery service. Department of Commerce policies for overnight delivery services require the application packages to be sent to the above address.

## **2. Paper Submission – If Hand-Delivered**

If the application is hand-delivered by the applicant or by its representative, one (1) signed original, plus two (2) copies of the application, must be delivered to the address below. Applicants are encouraged to also submit an electronic copy of the proposal, budget and budget narrative on a CD-ROM to facilitate the processing of applications.

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Minority Business Development Agency  
Office of Business Development – MBOC Program (extension 1940)  
HCHB, Room 1874  
Entrance #10  
15<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
(Between Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues)  
Washington, D.C.

MBDA will not accept applications that are physically delivered by the deadline, but that are rejected due to the applicant's failure to adhere to the above proper protocol for hand-deliveries.

### **E. Pre-Application Conference**

Prospective applicants are invited to participate in a pre-application conference scheduled for **December 18, 2007** at 1:00 p.m. EST. This event provides applicants with an opportunity to ask questions regarding the MBOC program and competition requirements. Interested parties may participate in person or by phone. Event registration can be found at [www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov) or by calling an MBDA representative listed in Section VII., Agency Contacts. All participants must register at least 24 hours prior to the conference.

### **F. Intergovernmental Review**

Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

### **G. Funding Restrictions**

#### **1. Management Fee**

For profit (commercial) organizations may negotiate a management fee, but such fees shall not exceed 7% of the total estimated direct costs (Federal plus non-Federal shares) for the proposed award. In very limited circumstances non-profit organizations may negotiate a management fee (not to exceed 7% of the total estimated direct costs for the proposed award); however, *Department of Commerce policy discourages payment of a management fee to non-profit organizations*. In accordance with 15 C.F.R. § 24.22, state and local governments (or their subgrantees) may not receive a management fee from Department of Commerce grant funds. For this purpose, a management fee is

characterized as a fee or profit over and above the direct and indirect costs related to the scope of work funded under the award. The management fee may not be included as part of indirect or overhead charge.

## **2. Indirect Costs**

The indirect cost policies contained in 2 C.F.R. part 220 (2007) (OMB Circular A-21, “Cost Principles for Educational Organizations), 2 C.F.R. part 225 (2007) (OMB Circular A-87, “Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments) and 2 C.F.R. part 230 (2007) (OMB Circular A-122, “Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations) will apply to MBDA awards for its business development programs. Indirect costs are those costs proposed for common or joint objectives and which cannot be readily identified with a particular cost objective. Therefore, if the MBDA award is to be the sole source of support for the applicant organization, all costs are direct costs and no indirect costs should be proposed.

The total dollar amount of the indirect costs proposed in an application under this program must not exceed the indirect cost rate negotiated and approved by the cognizant Federal agency prior to the proposed effective date of the award or 100 percent of the total proposed direct costs dollar amount in the application, whichever is less. A copy of an approved indirect cost rate must be included in the application package if indirect costs are proposed.

Organizations that do not have an established indirect cost rate negotiated and approved by a cognizant Federal agency may still propose indirect costs. For the recipient to recover indirect costs, however, the proposed budget must include a line-item for such costs. The recipient must also prepare and submit a cost allocation plan and indirect cost rate proposal as required by applicable guidelines set forth in the preceding paragraph. The allocation plan and the rate proposal must be submitted to the Office of Acquisition Management and Financial Assistance within ninety (90) days from the effective date of the award.

## **V. Application Review Information**

### **A. In General**

To apply for a MBOC award under this FFO, an eligible applicant must submit a complete application package to MBDA by the deadline and in the manner specified in Section IV., Application Submission Information, and Appendix D., Content and Form of Application.

### **B. Evaluation Criterion and Selection Procedures**

A review panel comprised of at least three (3) members, all of whom will be full-time federal employees and at least one (1) of whom will be an MBDA employee, will be formed to review responsive applications for each MBOC project. Applications will be

evaluated by the appropriate MBDA review panel and will be recommended for funding based on defined evaluation criterion and selection procedures.

***See Appendix E, Evaluation Criterion and Selection Procedures, for the specific MBOC evaluation criterion and selection procedures.***

## **VI. Award Administration Information**

### **A. Award Notices**

The notice of award (CD-450) is signed by the Department of Commerce Grants Officer and is the authorizing document. It is generally provided by overnight delivery to the appropriate business office of the recipient organization.

MBDA will notify unsuccessful applicants, in writing, by postal mail after a final selection has been made and after an offer has been accepted. Those proposals that are not ultimately selected for funding will be retained by MBDA for a period of three (3) years after which they will be destroyed. In the case of paper submissions, the original proposals shall be retained by MBDA for a three-year period and all other copies shall be destroyed, unless requested by the applicant in writing within thirty (30) days of notification.

### **B. Unsuccessful Competition**

On occasion, competitive solicitations or competitive panels may produce less than optimum results, such as competition resulting in the receipt of no applications or competition resulting in all unresponsive applications received. If the competition results in only one application, it may or may not require additional action from MBDA depending upon the competitive history of the area, the quality of application received, and the time and cost limits involved. In that event that any or all of these conditions arise, MBDA shall take the most time and cost-effective approach available that is in the best interest of the Government. This includes but is not limited to: (i) a new competition; (ii) re-paneling; or (iii) negotiation.

### **C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards are contained in the Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements published in the Federal Register on December 30, 2004 (69 FR 78389). You may obtain a copy of this notice by contacting the MBDA contact under Section VII., Agency Contacts, or by entering the *Federal Register* volume and page numbers provided in the previous sentence at the following Internet website: [www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/retrieve.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/retrieve.html).

## **D. Reporting**

Financial reports are to be submitted to the Department of Commerce Grants Office on a quarterly basis. A final financial report is due within ninety (90) days after expiration of the award. Performance narrative reports are to be submitted to the Federal Program Officer within forty-five (45) days after the end of the second program quarter of each program year. An end-of-year or final performance report is due forty-five (45) days after the end of each program year. Additional reporting requirements are set forth in Appendix A, Work and Training Requirements.

## **VII. Agency Contacts**

General MBOC information can be obtained through the applicable MBDA National Enterprise Center (regional office).

For the Los Angeles MBOC competition, please contact:

Ms. Linda M. Marmolejo, Regional Director  
MBDA San Francisco National Enterprise Center  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
221 Main Street, Room 1280  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
Tel: 415-744-3001

For the Louisiana MBOC competition, please contact:

Mr. John F. Iglehart, Regional Director  
MBDA Dallas National Enterprise Center  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1100 Commerce Street  
Room 726  
Dallas, TX 75242  
214-767-8001

For the Alabama MBOC and Florida MBOC competitions, please contact:

Mr. John Iglehart, Acting Regional Director  
MBDA Atlanta National Enterprise Center  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
401 Peachtree Street, NW  
Suite 1715  
Atlanta, GA 30308  
Tel: 404-730-3313 or 214-767-8001

For the Chicago MBOC, Gary MBOC and Wisconsin MBOC competitions, please contact:



Mr. Eric Dobyne, Regional Director  
MBDA Chicago National Enterprise Center  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
55 E. Monroe Street  
Suite 2810  
Chicago, IL 60603  
Tel: 312-353-0182

For the Washington, DC MBOC competition, please contact:

Mr. Heyward Davenport, Regional Director  
MBDA New York National Enterprise Center  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
26 Federal Plaza  
Room 3720  
New York, NY 10278  
Tel: 212-264-3262

In addition, prospective applicants may also contact:

Mr. Efrain Gonzalez, Chief  
MBDA Office of Business Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
14<sup>th</sup> and Constitution Ave., N.W.  
Room 5075  
Washington, DC 20230  
Tel: 202-482-1940

## **VIII. Other Information**

### **A. Limitation of Liability**

In no event will MBDA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if these programs fail to receive funding or are cancelled because of Agency priorities. Publication of this FFO does not oblige MBDA or the Department of Commerce to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

### **B. Audit Costs**

Audits shall be performed in accordance with audit requirements contained in Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations, revised June 27, 2003. OMB Circular A-133 requires that non-profit organizations, government agencies, Indian tribes and educational institutions expending \$500,000 or more in federal funds during a one-year period conduct a single audit in accordance with guidelines outlined in the Circular. Applicants are reminded that other audits may be conducted by the Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General and by other authorized federal agencies.

## **Appendix A**

### **Work and Training Requirements**

The work requirements specify the duties and responsibilities of each award recipient operating a MBOC. It is required that the proposal contain a description as to how the recipient intends to establish an organizational & functional framework for the management and operation of the MBOC to include the following requirements:

#### **A. Establishment of Office**

The award recipient must open an office within the applicable MBOC geographical service area and be fully operational within thirty (30) days after receipt of the award. MBDA encourages applicants to propose a location for the Center that is in a building, which is separate and apart from any of its existing offices in the geographic service area. Fully operational means that all staff are hired (including project director), all required signs are up, all items of furniture and equipment (e.g., computer hardware, software, Internet services, phones, faxes, etc.) are in place, and the MBOC's doors have been fully opened to the public for service. Failure to be fully operational within thirty (30) days may be grounds for termination of the award. Failure to hire a project director within thirty (30) calendar days may result in enforcement action under the award, including the withholding of award payments until full compliance is reached. The hiring methods for recruiting staff should be stated.

The MBOC must be accessible to disabled persons and strategically positioned within the locations identified in this FFO to ensure that it is: (1) close to the available public and private sector resources and (2) within a reasonable commuting distance to the minority business community.

The MBOC operator is responsible for providing services to eligible clients within its specified geographic service area. The proposal should include the MBOC's strategy in recruiting clients. Services can be delivered face-to-face or by virtual means (e.g., telephonic communications, email, fax, etc.). Each MBOC operator must make a good faith effort to support the Center and adhere to MBDA's policies. In addition, the MBOC operator and the project director must provide accessibility to MBDA. MBDA calls to the operator and/or the project director should be responded to within 24 hours.

Within thirty (30) days after receipt of the award, the operator shall report via email to the Federal Program Officer, the MBDA CIO of the Office of Information Technology, Research and Innovation and the MBDA MBOC Program Manager that project complies with all information technology requirements as specified in Appendix C. Within thirty (30) days after receipt of the award, the recipient shall report the name, contact telephone number and email address of the Project Director, Network or System Administrator.

## **B. Establishment of Key Roles**

The MBOC Project Director and key staff, the MBOC Advisory Committee and the MBOC Chairperson are critical to the program's overall success.

### **1. MBOC Project Director and Key Staff**

The MBOC Project Director is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the MBOC, including the satisfaction of all program work requirements on behalf of the operator. This individual must be hired and begin his/her duties within 30 days of the award. The Project Director's time must be dedicated one hundred percent (100%) to managing and implementing the MBOC program. For projects with a federal funding amount of \$200,000 or above, an additional key staff person such as a procurement and finance specialist must dedicate one hundred percent (100%) of his/her time to the program. Key staff should have significant experience in brokering of contracts and financings as well as the ability to coach and mentor MBEs. The Project Director should have a minimum Bachelors level education or commensurate professional experience. A subsequent change in the Project Director will require prior written approval by the Grants Officer.

### **2. MBOC Advisory Committee**

The MBOC Advisory Committee provides additional resources and guidance to the Project Director to accomplish the work requirements and program implementation. The Advisory Committee, a volunteer group, is comprised of business and industry leaders, federal, state, and local governmental representatives that conduct substantial purchasing and/or engage in significant financial transactions. The Advisory Committee is expected to play an active role in providing and identifying business opportunities which can be brokered by the MBOC for MBEs.

### **3. MBOC Chairperson**

The Chairperson should be a senior executive who is willing to serve, in a volunteer capacity, as Chairperson for a minimum of two (2) years. In addition to conducting outreach activities, the Chairperson shall provide guidance and advice on ways to engage the local business communities in MBOC activities. The MBOC Chairperson works closely with the Project Director to obtain the participation of senior executives on the Advisory Committee. Examples of MBOC Chairpersons have included the President and Chief Executive Officer of a major food manufacturer and the President and Chief Executive Officer of a major "Fortune 100" company.

## **C. Training**

As set forth below, MBOC operators and project staff are required to fully attend training programs designed for MBDA funded projects and to accumulate certain credit-hours for training (subject to the availability of the training as determined by MBDA):

Training Event	Operator	Project Director	Consultant(s)	Administrative
1. Post-Award Conference	Mandatory 10 credit-hours	Mandatory 10 credit-hours	N/A	N/A
2. Program Review & Orientation	Mandatory 8 credit-hours	Mandatory 8 credit-hours	Mandatory 8 credit-hours	Mandatory 8 credit-hours
3. Implementing a System for High-Quality Service (Yr 1) (or similar)	N/A	Mandatory++ 40 credit-hours	Mandatory++ 40 credit-hours	N/A
4. Performance System Orientation	Mandatory 1 credit-hour	Mandatory 4 credit-hours	Mandatory 3 credit-hours	Mandatory 2 credit-hours
5. MBDA National Conference	Mandatory** 8 credit-hours	Mandatory 24 credit-hours	Mandatory 24 credit-hours	N/A
6. MBDA NEC MED-Week	N/A	Mandatory 8-10 credit-hours	Mandatory 8-10 credit-hours	N/A
7. MBDA National MED-Week	Mandatory** 8 credit-hours	Mandatory 16-20 credit-hours	Mandatory 16-20 credit-hours	N/A
<b>Mandatory Training/ Program Year</b>	<b>27 Credit-Hours</b>	<b>70 - 116 Credit-Hours</b>	<b>59 - 105 Credit-Hours</b>	<b>10 Credit-Hours</b>

\*\* Note, attendance required for either, not both.

++ Note, this course can be waived if there is a certificate of completion (i.e. certificate) for the same course from the Tuck School of Business only. Substitutions from other educational institutions will not be accepted.

Credit-hours shall be allocated by MBDA as part of the MBOC performance evaluation. If the MBOC staff fails to accumulate the required credit-hours, the operator shall lose two (2) points from the assessment score during each evaluation period. Educational background and professional experience shall not be accepted as substitutions for attending the following trainings:

- 1. MBOC Post-Award Conference:** This session, held once in the first year, is designed to review the grant award and key issues pertaining to the successful management of the award. The award recipient (operator) and the project director must attend. Failure to attend shall designate the award recipient as non-compliant with the award and may result in award termination. A change in Project Director will require the Project Director to attend a post-award conference as soon as practicable following the commencement of his/her duties.
- 2. MBOC Program Review and Orientation:** This session, held once in the first year, will focus on understanding key aspects of MBOC operations and procedures. This training will not require travel and may be conducted over a series of days by teleconference or by MBDA staff attending the Center in person.
- 3. Implementing a System for High-Quality Service:** This training will be held once in the first year of the program in Hanover, NH. This program is a five (5) day training session. The training shall focus on:
  - Orientation to the MBDA strategy
    - Instilling the entrepreneurial mindset

- Standardization of client intake services
- Skills and information needed to provide high-quality services to emerging firms

Successful completion of this program, which involves a competency examination, will result in certification of the MBOC staff member by MBDA. In the event that one or more MBOC staff member should fail the competency examination, the MBOC shall lose two (2) points from the assessment score during each evaluation period of the project. MBDA anticipates this program to be conducted approximately in the second calendar quarter of 2008. Additional session(s) may be held in 2009 depending on the availability of funds. Such additional session(s) will require the attendance of MBOC staff not previously trained, and/or those who failed to successfully complete the initial training program. For each of the three funding periods, the MBOC operator shall budget travel-related expenses for each attendee. For 2008, a \$5,000 per-person, registration fee (program fee, materials, lodging and some meals are included) is waived. However, for each of 2009 and 2010, the MBOC shall budget an additional \$5,000 per-person, registration fee (program fee, materials, lodging and some meals included) for at least one staff person to attend this training.

4. **Performance System Orientation:** This training is designed to review basic access, navigation and understanding of the MBDA Performance System. All trainings shall be conducted telephonically; participants will need access to computer and internet during the training session(s). The operator is required to attend 1 session on reporting. The Project Director is required to attend 3 sessions: (a) reporting, (b) performance system, and (c) understanding on-line tools. Consultant(s) is required to attend 2 sessions: (a) performance system, and (b) understanding on-line tools. Administrative Assistants are required to attend 1 session on the performance system.
5. **MBDA National Conference:** This training is designed to review key Agency initiatives among all of its funded projects and MBDA staff. Specialized programmatic training is also offered at this event. The MBOC attendees shall be required to attend a formal meeting and/or training session conducted by the MBDA Office of Business Development. The National Conference is held once per year, depending on the availability of funds. The location of this event varies. However, the MBOC should anticipate travel related costs to this activity. This session is normally a 3-day event.
6. **MED Week – National Enterprise Center (NEC):** This is an annual program conducted by each NEC within its respective MBDA region. MED Week is a celebratory event under presidential proclamation. This event focuses on recognizing MBOC clients that have made significant economic impact within the NEC region. Market orientations and training programs are offered to the MBOC. This event is held once per year, depending on the availability of funds. The MBOC should anticipate travel related costs to this activity in its respective MBDA region. This session is normally a 1-2 day event.

7. **MED Week – National:** This is an annual program conducted in Washington, D.C. This program is the national culmination of all MED Week celebrations. This event focuses on identifying new opportunities into marketplaces, business networking, key research, distribution of materials and reports for and about MBEs. MED Week also hosts a celebratory event and awards recognition of MBE clients that have made significant economic impact on a national level. The MBOC attendees shall be required to attend a formal meeting and/or training session conducted by the MBDA Office of Minority Entrepreneurship and Trade. This event is held once per year, depending on the availability of funds. The MBOC should anticipate travel related costs to this activity. This session is normally a 1-3 day event.

#### **D. MBOC Work Requirements**

The MBOC is required to perform work in four (4) basic areas – facilitate the award of contract and financial transactions to MBEs, establishment of an MBOC advisory committee and subcommittees, program promotion and advocacy and operational quality. These elements are designed to increase the exposure and visibility of MBEs and MBOC efforts in these activities and should provide quantifiable results.

**The MBOC may not perform, engage in the day-to-day operations or otherwise make decisions for its clients.**

#### **1. Facilitate the Award of Contract and Financial Transactions to MBEs**

The MBOC operator must implement a process that results in the award of contract and financial transactions to MBE clients. To accomplish this objective, there are four primary functional areas of responsibility that must be executed:

- Development and Maintenance of a Database/Listing of Viable MBEs;
- Development and Maintenance of a Database/Listing of Potential Contract and Financial Opportunities;
- Establishing Client Relationships; and
- Brokering of Contract and Financial Transactions for award to MBE clients.

MBOC operators must not take credit for a contract or financial transaction without having performed some work directly on behalf of the MBE that helped the MBE obtain the contract or complete the financial transaction. ***This concept is known as “harvesting” transactions and is a prohibited practice. See Appendix B, Section B, Item 7., Definition of Harvesting.***

##### **(a) Development and Maintenance of a Database/Listing Viable MBEs**

The MBOC operator must develop and maintain a database/listing of MBEs with annual revenues of at least \$500,000 or with rapid-growth potential (“SGI Firms”). The listing should be utilized to match MBEs with key decision makers in the public and private sectors that have the ability to influence and/or consummate financial transactions. The

database/listing should at a minimum contain the name of the principal(s); address, phone number, and email; ethnicity; business start date; primary type of business; number of full and part time employees, and gross annual sales. In addition, the MBEs should be entered into MBDA's Phoenix system, which is a database of firms capable of selling goods and services to the public and private sectors. The MBOC will ensure that entities entered into Phoenix are valid. (See Section II, Award Information, Item 3, Network, Tools and Information Exchange) Phoenix firms are eligible to be matched with procurement opportunities through a matching system called "Opportunities." Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying local minority firms with at least \$500,000 in annual revenues or with rapid growth potential able to receive contracts and financings;
- Entering and updating the data in MBDA's Phoenix system; and
- Utilizing the data to conduct contract, procurement, and financing matchmakers.

**(b) Development and Maintenance of a Database/Listing of Potential Contracts, Subcontracts, and Financial Opportunities.**

Develop and maintain a database/list through MBDA online systems (i.e., Resource Locator, Phoenix/Opportunity System, Capital Locator System) that includes information on:

- Public (federal, state and local government) and private (domestic and foreign) sector contracting and subcontracting opportunities;
  - Procuring source; title and description of the requirement; point of contact with name, phone and email address; the procurement method, total estimated contract value; performance period; and anticipated award date. This data must be entered into MBDA's Opportunity System.
- Financial institutions including bonding companies, banks, angel investor groups, private equity groups, and venture capitalists;
  - Identifying capital resources such as standard, commercial, and alternative debt, equity investors, and mezzanine financing, bonds (performance and surety), and trade credit opportunities. This data must be entered into MBDA's Capital Locator System.

Activities include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying business ownership opportunities such as franchises, licensing arrangements, and mergers and acquisitions;
- Cleansing and updating the data on a regular basis, no less than twice per program year; and
- Using data to conduct contract, procurement, and financing matchmakers.

### **(c) Establishing Client Relationships**

The MBOC is required to establish relationships with MBE clients. A key component is the intake process and assessment of client capabilities. To accomplish this work requirement the MBOC must include an intake process that effectively assesses the capabilities and needs of an MBE firm. The services provided by the MBOC must be documented on MBDA's online system Activities under this work requirement may include, but are not limited to:

- Develop of an intake process;
- Identify a critical mass of MBEs and assess their capabilities, needs, and expectations; and
- Ensuring that clients have executed a written document that establishes the client relationship.

### **(d) Brokering of Contracts, Subcontracts, and Financial Transactions for Award to MBEs and Related Business Assistance Services.**

- The MBOC is required to establish a process and system whereby the buyers of goods and services are matched and brought face to face with pre-qualified MBEs. This brokering of contract awards entails more than giving MBEs an opportunity to participate in the bidding process. It includes working closely with MBEs to ensure that they have the information and tools required to be effective when competing for and fulfilling opportunities.
- The MBOC is required to develop a Strategic Brokering Plan for MBEs. This generally entails the MBOC providing direct business assistance services to individual MBE clients, including but not limited to assessing client capabilities and needs, and assisting the client in developing a course of action to successfully obtain contracts and financial transactions. Examples of business assistance services include but are not limited to the preparation of a plan for how the MBOC will introduce an MBE to purchasers of goods and services and providers of capital and strategies for assistance in the areas of joint ventures, mergers and acquisitions, matchmakers and venture capital forums.
- Referring MBEs to any of MBDA's other funded projects that specialize in specific growth assistance and/or other sources that are capable of facilitating MBE growth. MBEs so referred shall be identified in the semi-annual report to MBDA.
- Developing and maintaining strategic alliances with purchasing executives, government procurement officials, banking officials, and other similar resources to facilitate activities that result in financings.
- Conducting matchmakers, financing forums, opportunity fairs, and networking events between MBEs and opportunity providers. MBOCs must implement a system to register participants and track results and outcomes of these activities.
- Providing brokering services to MBEs. Examples of brokering include but are not limited to: (a) matching an MBE with a federal contracting officer that results in a contract; (b) matching an MBE to a source of financing that results in a financial



- transaction; (c) matching an MBE firm with another firm or MBE that results in a joint venture or acquisition; (d) acting as the intermediary between parties that have reached an impasse in a contract or financial negotiation and providing advice or strategy that leads to a contract or financial award; and (e) providing advice that leads to a documented economic benefit for the MBE clients.
- Participation in and support of designated MBDA Business-to-Business Linkage programs throughout the program year. This program is a regional event conducted by MBDA that brings together certified MBEs (e.g. 8(a)) and other SGI firms, for potential business to business teaming arrangements. The MBOC shall be expected to collaborate with MBDA in identifying key participants, conducting outreach and maintaining ongoing communication with these participants prior to the event, during the event (where possible) and after the event. The objective of the Business-to-Business Linkage program is to build MBE capacity for competition of larger awards, and ultimately the recording of contracting and financial dollars for programmatic success.

These services are required to be documented through MBDA's online system.

## **2. MBOC Advisory Committee and Subcommittees**

Each MBOC must establish and maintain a functioning advisory committee that should be comprised of public and private sector executives. The Advisory Committee is a volunteer group and a significant component of the MBOCs business development strategy. Its primary function is to provide assistance to the MBOC Executive Director in satisfying the work requirements and implementing the program. The Advisory Committee assists the MBOC staff in identifying upcoming contract and financing opportunities for MBEs and is available to minority firms for specific information on these opportunities. The MBOC should consider the following types of entities for the Advisory Committee membership: banks, bonding companies, construction companies, technology companies, chambers of commerce, trade organizations, contract and procurement professional organizations, federal, local and state buying officials, and other MBDA funded organizations. The Advisory Committee must meet at least quarterly.

MBDA recommends that the MBOC establish subcommittees of the Advisory Committee focused on specific industries and the work requirements. Applicants must provide a detailed plan regarding how the committee and subcommittees will be established and the objectives for each. Possible subcommittees include, but are not limited to: coaching and mentoring, matchmaking, finance, procurement, and mergers and acquisitions.

## **3. Program Promotion and Advocacy**

The MBOC is required to promote its activities within the business community it serves. The MBOC must advocate the use of minority businesses to the following organizations: Chambers of Commerce, business and trade associations, state and local government purchasing departments, economic development and planning offices and at trade fairs and other MBE outreach events. The MBOC will market individual firms to the public

and private sectors to build market awareness of the capability, talent and capacity of MBEs. To accomplish its objectives, the MBOC may use public service announcements and paid advertising with prior approval from MBDA.

A minimum of five (5) strategic partners must be established by the operator within one hundred-twenty (120) days after receipt of the award. The MBOC is required to maintain these partnerships throughout the term of the award. The MBOC must notify MBDA in writing if it is replacing/changing a partner. The MBOC must replace a partner within forty-five (45) days after termination of that previously established partnership. The MBOC shall consult with its MBDA National Enterprise Center prior to completing the MOU. All strategic partnerships must be reviewed by the NEC to ensure if it meets the criteria specified in the Announcement before the MBOC will be able to claim such partnership. MBDA shall have no direct relationship with or responsibility to the MBOC's strategic partners. The MBOC operator must also use its best efforts to partner and otherwise collaborate with MBDA and with other MBDA funded programs (intra-strategic partnerships). These intra-strategic partnerships shall be established in support of the parties' mutual goals for assisting clients. The MBOC is further encouraged to share clients with these parties to facilitate client interests.

In addition, the MBOC shall carry out a plan-of-action that includes but not limited to the following actions:

- Develop an MBOC marketing brochure for distribution to the public;
- Develop an MBOC website that conforms to MBDA Web Standards (see Appendix C., Information Technology and Computer Requirements);
- Develop an individualized program description for inclusion on the MBDA Portal and the MBOC web site;
- Conduct or participate in one local Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week activity. This event is held annually in late summer or early fall, in or near the MBDA NEC. Activities may include: obtaining speakers, hosting luncheons or dinners, identifying MBEs, and/or inviting public/private sector buyers;
- Attend National MED Week – This event is held annually in the fall in Washington, DC. At a minimum, travel expenditures for the MBOC Project Director must be included in the proposal;
- Participate in the MBDA National Training Conference. This conference is designed to bring MBDA staff and the funded organizations together to discuss strategies for working effectively on behalf of MBEs. Previous conferences have been held at various locations throughout the country. At a minimum, travel expenses for the Project Director and one consultant must be proposed.

Group training sessions are considered a form of business development services that can be provided to the MBOC clients. This function may be subject to client fees (if proposed) and may directly contribute to the MBOC performance goals.

#### 4. **Operational Quality**

This is the work requirement in which MBDA assesses the overall management and operation of the MBOC. Performance in this area directly contributes to MBDA's overall qualitative evaluation and performance rating of the MBOC. In addition, this work requirement contributes to MBDA's ability to provide guidance and oversight and the MBOC's ability to be recognized as an effective business operation. Under this function, the MBOC shall:

- (a) Execute signed work plan agreements and engagement letters with clients;
- (b) Input data/progress/results to the performance database within seventy-two (72) hours from the time of service;
- (c) If client fees proposed, establish procedures for collecting and accounting for all fees charged to clients;
- (d) Maintain records/files for all work charged to the program (e.g., time sheets, program related expenses) and clients;
- (e) Ensure all files are properly recorded and supported by client MBE self-certification, MBDA data privacy notice, work assignments, finished work products, awarded transactions, etc.;
- (f) Obtain written acceptance and verification (with client signatures) of services provided to its clients and documentation of any financings/contracts (source documentation required) awarded to its clients. For services reported, documentation must be in the MBOC's client files within thirty (30) days after the end of every quarter in which a client receives services;
- (g) Comply with all reporting requirements provided upon award;
- (h) Cooperate with MBDA in maintaining content for the Phoenix/Opportunity system, Resource Locator, and other available online tools located at [www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov);
- (i) Promote and utilize the services and resources of other MBDA programs, sponsored efforts and/or voluntary activities; and
- (j) Adhere to MBDA's trademark and licensing requirements for all forms of communication including but not limited to signage, stationary and other MBOC-related publications. Such requirements shall be provided at the time of award. These requirements include but are not limited to specific size, location, and font of the MBOC logo. A communications guide and the MBOC logo will be made available to the operator at the post-award conference.
  - Signage - Signs should be highly visible to the MBOC's clients and general public. They should be prominently displayed on entrances or doors.
  - Printed Materials – These items shall include the name of MBDA on all stationery, letterhead, brochures, etc.
  - Internet Presence and Information – The MBOC is to develop and maintain an Internet presence (*see* Appendix C, Information Technology and Computer Requirements) and shall include standardized language as provided by MBDA.
  - Telephonic Communication - Identify the MBOC immediately upon answering the telephone. If the recipient also requires that its

organization's name be given, it should be provided only after the MBOC has been verbally identified to a caller. Refer to MBDA in all advocacy and outreach efforts such as speaking engagements, news conferences, etc.

The MBOC is not authorized to use either the Department of Commerce's (DOC) official seal or the MBDA logo in any of its publications, documents or materials without prior written approval from the Department of Commerce or from MBDA (as the case may be).

The term ***Minority Business Opportunity Center (MBOC)*** is a trademark of the Federal Government and the Government reserves exclusive rights in the term. Permission to use the term is granted to the award recipient for the sole purpose of representing the activities of the award recipient in the fulfillment of the terms of the financial assistance award. MBDA reserves the right to control the quality of the use of the term by the award recipient. In all printed materials, such as promotional literature and stationery, whenever ***Minority Business Opportunity Center***<sup>™</sup> is cited, the <sup>™</sup> must be used.

## Appendix B

### **Performance Measures and Related Definitions**

#### **A. Performance Measures and Bonus Points**

In accordance with 15 CFR Parts 14 and 24, award recipients will be responsible for the effective management of all functions and activities supported by the financial assistance award. Award recipients will be required to use program performance measures in a performance report due forty-five (45) days after the end of the first semi-annual period and second semi-annual period. All performance reporting is conducted electronically via MBDA's portal. Recipients are required to input progress/results to the performance database within seventy-two (72) hours from the time of service. The award recipient shall also provide an end-of-year assessment of the accomplishments of the project using these measures. The Year-End or Final Narrative Performance Report is due forty-five (45) days after the end of the funding year.

The minimum performance goals required for the below performance measures for each of the solicited geographic service areas are set forth in Section I.E., Minimum Performance Goals. The minimum performance goals are listed on an annual basis by MBDA and should be broken out into quarterly increments by the applicant in its proposal. The MBOC is required to utilize, in a good faith effort, all of its resources to achieve the stated goals. **Should the MBOC exceed its performance requirements prior to the end of a funding year, the MBOC is expected to maintain operations at full strength and continue to provide services and reach greater performance outcomes.**

The evaluation criteria and weighted-value for measuring MBOC project performance for each program year are as follows:

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Performance Points (at 100% Goal Achievement Level)**</b>	<b>Performance Points (at 110% Goal Achievement Level - Maximum)**</b>
1a. Dollar Value of Awarded Contracts and Procurements	40	44.0
1b. Dollar Value of Awarded Financial Transactions	20	22.0
2. Number of Clients Served	7	7.7
3. Number of Jobs Created	5	5.5
4. Number of Clients Receiving Transactions	5	5.5

5. Administrative Management & Operational Quality	23	23.8	
* Maintenance of SGI Client Portfolio	(3 points)	(3.3 points)	
* Customer Relationship Management	(3 points)	(3.0 points)	
* Management Assessment	(3 points)	(3.0 points)	
* Consulting Hours	(3 points)	(3.3 points)	
* Maintenance of Non-Federal Cost Share	(3 points)	(3.0 points)	
* Partnerships	(5 points)	(5.0 points)	
* Market Promotion	(1 point)	(1.0 point)	
* Resource Entries	(2 points)	(2.2 points)	
<b>Bonus Points</b>		<b>Bonus Points++ (120% performance)</b>	<b>Bonus Points++ (140% performance)</b>
1. Contracts/Procurements		1	2
2. Financing		1	2
3. Clients Served		1	2
4. Jobs Created		1	2
5. Clients Receiving Transactions		1	2
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100 points</b>	<b>118.5 maximum points</b>	

**\*\* Performance Points:** MBDA encourages and rewards high achievement levels. Up to 110% of the maximum allowable points for most performance measures will be awarded, based on the extent to which the MBOC exceeds the minimum performance goal for the identified category. [For example, if the minimum performance goal for the Dollar Value of Awarded Contracts and Procurements is \$12 million and the MBOC achieves \$13 million in this category, the operator will receive 108.3% of its performance goal, resulting in 43.3 points (\$13 million / \$12 million x 40 points). Alternatively, if the MBOC were to achieve \$20 million in this category, the operator will receive 166.66 of its performance goal, however the operator would be limited by the 110% threshold and receive 44.0 points (40 points x 110%).]

Under the Administrative Management and Operational Quality performance measure, the 110% maximum allowable point threshold is limited to each of the following sub-measures: (i) maintenance of SGI portfolio; (ii) consulting hours; and (iii) resource entries. These points will be determined for each of these sub-measures based upon the

extent to which the MBOC exceeds the minimum performance goals assigned to each sub-measure.

++ **Bonus Points:** An MBOC operator may earn up to a maximum of 10 performance bonus points in each program year as follows:

- a) 1 bonus point for performance outcomes that exceed the minimum performance goal by 20% or more but less than 40%.
- b) 1 additional bonus point for performance outcomes that exceed the minimum performance goal by 40% or more.
- c) The specific performance goals eligible for bonus points are:
  - Contracts/Procurements (2 points maximum);
  - Financing (2 points maximum);
  - Number of Clients Served (2 points maximum);
  - Number of Jobs Created (2 points maximum); and
  - Number of Clients Receiving Transactions (2 points maximum).

As a cooperative partner, MBDA views the MBOC as an envoy and service provider to the minority business community. Therefore, high achievement in any one performance measure does not excuse an operator's failure to reach other performance goals

## **B. Definitions**

1. **Brokering** – This represents the services provided by the MBOC to its client. It is the act of bringing buyers and sellers together for the purpose of executing contracts, financings or other agreements leading to an economic benefit.
2. **Dollar Value of Awarded Contracts and Procurements** – This represents the total dollar value of successfully awarded contracts and/or the total principal value of executed sales/delivery contracts of services/products/intellectual rights and/or other binding financial considerations secured by clients of the project, with the assistance of project staff.

For purposes of this performance element, Dollar Value of Awarded Contracts and Procurements are those transactions which have a specific dollar value, and which produce a direct commercial benefit for the client firms. In order for a contract award to be considered for this performance requirement, the award must have been made as a direct result of MBOC activity.

MBDA recognizes that the financial obligations evidenced by these transactions may be long-term, and require the delivery of goods and services over an extended period. In some cases, the agreements may have been awarded as indefinite demand indefinite quantity. Consequently, it is not necessary that the funds or other financial value specified under the agreements have actually changed hands for the project to receive credit. In the case of multi-year and multiple-year awards (base and option years), the

full contract value, including option years, can be claimed in the year the contract was signed. Non-single year contracts shall require the MBOC to communicate with the client, obtain proof of awards that were let on or prior to the end of the MBOC award period and to conduct an update in the MBDA performance system.

3. Dollar Value of Awarded Financial Transactions – The dollar value of transactions are defined as the total principal value of approved loans, equity financings, bonds, leases (property and equipment) or other binding financial agreements secured by clients of the project, with the assistance of MBOC staff. For purposes of this performance element, eligible financial transactions are those which have a specific dollar value, and which expand its capital base/operations, or produce some other direct commercial benefit for client firms. In order to be deemed complete, a financial transaction must be documented by an executed and binding agreement between the MBOC client (firm) and a party (financier) capable of performing its obligations under the terms of the agreement.
4. Number of Jobs Created – This is defined as the number of new full time and/or part time employment opportunities reported on the client’s payroll during the funding year as a result of MBOC assistance. Persons on paid sick leave, paid holiday and paid vacations are included as employees as are salaried officers and executives of corporations. However, proprietors and partners of unincorporated business are not considered employees under this definition.
5. Number of Clients Served – This represents the actual number of clients served in a program year. Clients are defined as those MBEs that complete a written engagement with the MBOC for specific services as listed under the work requirements and registered with the MBOC. Clients may be counted only once in a program year.
6. Administrative Management & Operational Quality – Operational quality refers to the quality and effectiveness of the project operator’s delivery of client services and project scope, as evidenced by the following performance elements relating to the day-to-day management of the project:
  - a) Maintenance of SGI Client Portfolio - The Center shall be rated on the balance of SGI firms versus overall clients served. The MBOC must maintain the following ratio in order to achieve the specified points.

Year	Percent of SGI Firms Served & Allocated Points							
First	50.0% (+)	3 Pts.	49.9-40.0%	2 Pts.	39.9-30.0%	1 Pts.	29.9% or less	0 Pts.
Second	60.0% (+)	3 Pts.	59.9-50.0%	2 Pts.	49.9-40.0%	1 Pts.	39.9% or less	0 Pts.
Third	70.0% (+)	3 Pts.	69.9-60.0%	2 Pts.	59.9-50.0%	1 Pts.	49.9% or less	0 Pts.

*Note: Percent SGI firms served shall account for all active clients served in current program year.*



- b) Customer Relationship Management – This item refers to a process conducted by MBDA with the clients of the MBOC. MBDA shall verify the services rendered by the Center and gather qualitative information for client satisfaction. MBDA will utilize a survey tool. The MBOC must score at the following satisfaction ratings in order to be allocated the listed points.

Client Satisfaction	Points
80.0% or more	3
70.0% – less than 80%	2
60.0% - less than 70%	1
59.9% or less	0

- c) Management Assessment - The management assessment reflects MBDA's own evaluation of the overall management of the MBOC project, based on the Agency's internal review of the project's operations. The management assessment reflects such areas as the development of written engagement letters and work plans, proper staffing, adherence to scheduled work hours, recordkeeping, successful completion of Agency training, and any other areas which MBDA may deem to be relevant in determining the overall quality of the project's operations (see Appendix A., Section D.5., Operational Quality). Recipients may also lose two points from the assessment if the MBOC staff fails to accumulate the required training credit hours. (See Appendix A., Section C., Training)
- d) Partnerships – The MBOC must establish and maintain strategic partnerships throughout the life of the award. These strategic partnerships must be documented in writing and be structured such that the relationship shall have a direct impact on the MBOC in order to assist the MBOC meet its performance goals and/or its non-federal cost share requirements. Performance points for this element will be allocated to the MBOC after MBDA has verified the completion of the activity. If a partner does not contribute to the MBOC's performance goal and/or its non-federal cost share requirements, the Center's score will be assessed accordingly. In addition to the minimum requirement of strategic partnerships, the MBOC operator must use its best efforts to partner and otherwise collaborate with MBDA and with other MBDA funded programs (intra-strategic partnerships). (See Appendix A, Section D.4., Program Promotion and Advocacy.)
- e) Consulting Hours – Refers to the actual time spent by the MBOC when providing direct, indirect and/or group counseling services to MBE clients. These hours shall relate to each MBE, as originated in the client engagement and tracked on the MBDA performance system. These hours shall be compared to the recipient's originally proposed staff allocation summary. Points shall be allocated as a percentage of hours accomplished versus quarterly and cumulative goals.

- f) Maintenance of Non-Federal Cost Share – MBDA shall monitor the MBOC’s rate of non-federal cost share throughout the program period. The non-Federal share, whether in cash or in-kind, is expected to be paid out at the same general rate as the Federal share. Points shall be allocated as a percentage of reported accomplished versus quarterly and cumulative goals.
  - g) Market Promotion – Represents the total number of successfully completed activities (per reporting period) as proposed in the applicant’s response to this Announcement.
  - h) Resource Entries – Defined as the total quantity of accurate and timely records entered into MBDA’s Portal tools (e.g., Phoenix, Opportunity, Capital Locator, Resource Locator, etc.) in support of its efforts to disseminate information electronically. Points shall be allocated as a percentage of reported accomplished versus quarterly and cumulative goals.
7. Harvesting – Defined as the MBOC taking credit for a contract or financial transaction without having performed some work directly on behalf of the MBE that helped the MBE obtain the contract or complete the financial transaction.

Harvesting also includes an MBOC utilizing an Operator’s existing client lists and claiming them as the MBOC clients when the MBE has not agreed to register/work with the MBOC. MBOCs can and should utilize an Operator’s membership lists to develop its clients and client relationships. In this instance, the MBOC must document the relationship to show that it evolved as a result of MBOC activity and not the activity of the Operator in the course of its business. ***Harvesting is a prohibited practice. MBOCs found to employ the practice of harvesting are subject to termination for cause.***

**Additional program definitions and operating procedures are set forth in the MBOC Program Handbook (Handbook), which will be incorporated by reference into each MBOC award and applicable to each MBOC operator. Applicants may access the Handbook via the MBDA Business Internet Portal ([www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov)).**

## Appendix C

### **Information Technology and Computer Requirements**

MBDA requires that all award recipients meet certain requirements related to the acquisition, installation, configuration, maintenance and security of information technology (IT) assets *within thirty (30) days after receipt of the award*, in order to ensure seamless and productive interface between and among all grant recipients, minority-owned businesses, the MBDA Federal IT system and the public. These required assets and their configuration are hereinafter referred to as the “enterprise.” The basic components of the enterprise are the desktop workstations, the server, local area network (LAN) components and a connection to the Internet.

At a minimum, each grantee shall provide one (1) desktop computer for the exclusive use of each employee delivering minority business assistance to the public under an award from MBDA. All desktop computers shall be connected to a client/server network using an Ethernet protocol enabling communication with all workstations on the award recipient’s network. The server shall have a constant, high-speed broadband Internet connection. The grantee shall ensure that each of his/her employees, to include management, administrative personnel, contractors, full-time, part-time, and non-paid (volunteer) staff have a unique electronic mail (email) address that is available to the public. Each grantee shall design, develop and maintain, in accordance with the computer requirements, a presence on the Internet’s World Wide Web and shall maintain appropriate computer and network security precautions during all periods of funding by MBDA. All IT requirements, as described herein, shall be met within thirty (30) calendar days after the award.

*An award recipient’s failure to adhere to the MBOC computer requirements as set forth herein may result in enforcement action under the award, including but not limited to the withholding of award payments until full compliance is reached.*

#### **A. Network Design**

At all locations where services are delivered to the eligible public as defined by Executive Order 11625, the recipient shall operate a Client Server Network that provides shared disk drives and the setup of print queues for a network printer(s) (if individual printers are not provided) for each staff person delivering services to the eligible public. MBDA shall, from time to time, specify certain configurations of the enterprise hardware and software to meet interface requirements.

Currently, MBDA recommends servers using an operating system that is fully compatible with Microsoft Windows 2003. Any server providing principal service to the desktops shall contain 200 or more gigabytes (GB) of hard drive space using two or more disks configured appropriately to ensure data retention should one disk fail. At least one (1) Dual-Core Intel central processing unit (CPU) or any other server providing principal service to the desktops shall be used. Web servers, mail servers and/or servers maintained

by a third party such as an Internet Service Provider (ISP) shall meet the minimum server specifications as stated herein.

**B. Desktop Workstations**

All desktop systems shall not be more than two (2) calendar years old at time of award and shall contain an Intel Cores Duo Processor class central processing unit (CPU), operating at speeds not less than 2.33 Gigahertz (GHz). Each desktop system shall contain a hard drive with a storage capacity of at least forty (80) GB and 1 Gigabyte (GB) of RAM and a CD or DVD reader/writer. All desktop systems shall have installed an operating system fully compatible with Microsoft Windows XP Professional or higher Operating System, MS Office 2003 Professional or higher, Microsoft Internet Explorer 7.x, Anti-Virus software, software or hardware-based Firewall and Adobe Reader 8.1 or higher. Additionally, it is suggested that a full-page scanner, along with software fully compatible with Adobe Acrobat (Standard or Professional, 8.0 or higher) be installed on at least one workstation for the production of electronic document submissions.

**C. Maintenance and Security**

A network map (“as-built”) reflecting adherence to the computer and networking requirements set forth herein shall be maintained by the recipient for review by MBDA at any time. Each recipient shall designate and train one administrative person competent in the operation of an Operations System fully compatible with Windows 2003 network (or higher) and local area network (LAN) technology as described herein. From time to time, MBDA may require that certain software be loaded on servers and desktops. In any given year, the cost of this additional software may be \$300.00 per workstation and \$600.00 per server.

Every employee of the MBOC shall be assigned a unique username and password to access the network. Every employee shall be required to sign a written computer security agreement (a suggested format for the computer security agreement will be provided at the time of award and/or on the MBDA Portal (website)). Every manager, employee, and contractor and any other person given access to the computer system shall sign the security agreement and an original copy of the signed agreement shall be kept in the MBOC files. A photocopy of the signed agreement shall be submitted to MBDA, no later than thirty (30) days after receipt of the award. The original agreement shall be maintained on file by the award recipient. All subsequent new hires and associations requiring access to the MBOC or MBDA systems shall read, understand, and sign the security agreement prior to issuance of a password. No employee shall have access to any MBDA system(s) without a signed security agreement on file at MBDA.

**D. Web Site**

Each recipient shall create and maintain a public web site using a unique domain/address (e.g., [www.center-name.com](http://www.center-name.com)), that will conform to MBDA web standards (A comprehensive listing of MBDA web standards can be found on the MBDA Portal). MBDA Web standards may include, *but are not limited to the following*:

- The first page (Index page) of the web site shall *clearly* identify the recipient as a Minority Business Opportunity Center funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency. The index page of the web site shall load on software fully compatible with Microsoft Internet Explorer 7.x browser software using a normal home computer with 56 Kb/s analog phone-line connection in less than five (5) seconds.
- The web site shall contain a "Contact" page with the names of all managers and employees, the business and mailing address of the MBOC, business phone and fax numbers and email addresses of the MBOC and employees, a statement referencing the services available at the MBOC, the hours under which the MBOC operates and a link to the MBDA homepage at [www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov).
- For purposes of electronically directing clients to the appropriate MBOC staff, the recipient's web site shall also contain a short biographical statement for each employee of the MBOC including management, contractors, part-time, full time, and non-paid (volunteer) personnel, providing services directly to the eligible public under an award from MBDA. This biographical statement shall contain:
  - the full name of the employee, and
  - a brief description of the expertise of the employee to include academic degrees, certifications and any other pertinent information with respect to that employee's qualifications to deliver minority business assistance services to eligible members of the public.
- No third party advertising of commercial goods and services shall be permitted on the site. All links to websites other than federal, state or local government agencies and non-profit educational institutions must be requested, in advance and in writing, through the MBDA CIO of the Office of Information Technology, Research and Innovation and the website must provide an external link policy or notice stating that they will be redirected to an external website. Specifically, a notice similar to the following must be provided:

*The appearance of hyperlinks to other sites does not constitute endorsement by the [recipient's company name] or by the Minority Business Development Agency of these web sites or the information, products or services contained therein. Regarding such external web sites, we do not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at these locations. These links are provided consistent with [recipient's company name] stated purpose as shown on our web site. We recommend that you review the website's information collection policy or terms and conditions to fully understand what information is collected and/or provided.*

- Furthermore, the approval for the placement of such links shall not be unreasonably withheld but is subject to withdrawal if MBDA determines the linked site is unsuitable. No employee of the Program Operator, nor any other

person, shall use the MBOC web site for any purpose other than that approved under the terms of the agreement between the recipient and MBDA.

- Every page of the web site shall comply with Federal standards of the American With Disabilities Act, Section 508, and be reviewed by the recipient for accuracy, currency, and appropriateness every three (3) months. In addition, MBDA's Section 508 Officer may occasionally review the recipient's site to ensure that the web site is Section 508 Compliant. For additional information and guidelines, please visit [www.section508.gov](http://www.section508.gov). Appropriate privacy notices and handicapped accessibility will be predominately featured. In general, MBDA may audit the recipient's web site and recommend changes in accordance with the guidelines set forth herein.
- The recipient will also be responsible for informing the MBDA CIO of the Office of Information Technology, Research and Innovation and to the MBDA MBOC Program Manager of any changes operating changes such as location, contact information or otherwise.

**E. Time for Compliance Regarding IT Requirements**

*Within thirty (30) days after receipt of the award*, the recipient shall report via email to the Federal Program Officer and the MBDA CIO of the Office of Information Technology, Research and Innovation and to the MBDA MBOC Program Manager that he/she has complied with all technical requirements as specified herein (a checklist will be provided at the Post Award Conference). Within thirty (30) days after receipt of the award, the recipient shall report the name, contact telephone number and email address of the Project Director, Network or System Administrator.

**F. Performance System**

All required performance reporting to MBDA shall be conducted via the Internet using the Performance system to be found at a secure web site ([www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov)).

**G. Data Integrity**

The recipient shall take the necessary steps to ensure that all data entered into MBDA systems, and systems operated by the recipient in support of the award, or by any employee of the recipient is verified, accurate and timely.

## Appendix D

### Content and Format of Application

Applicants are encouraged to review the sample MBOC application materials available via the MBDA Business Internet Portal ([www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov)) for additional guidance.

In preparing the program narrative and accompanying documentation, applicants should carefully consider the: (i) work and training requirements set forth in Section I.B and Appendix A; and (ii) the minimum performance goals set forth in Section I.E. Applicants may also wish to review the application evaluation criterion set forth in Appendix E.

A complete application, whether filed in paper format or electronically, should contain the below information in the following order:

- A. **Cover Page:** At a minimum the application cover page must provide the applicant's name, address, telephone number, email address (if any), date of submission and the MBOC project for which the applicant is applying.
- B. **Table of Contents:** Applicants should outline the full contents of the application and provide corresponding page numbers. Applicants should number all pages of the application consecutively.
- C. **Program Narrative:**
  - 1. **Applicant Capability** – In addition to addressing each of the sub-criteria stated in Appendix E, Section A.1, applicants should include a detailed narrative discussion of its: (i) organizational background information; (ii) prior experience in working with SGI minority firms; (iii) delivery of applicable services (as outlined in this FFO) in the geographical service area; and (iv) related successful client outcomes. In particular, applicants should provide a market assessment in support of its application and include its prior experiences with assisting minority-owned firm with respect to supply chains.

Applicants should also submit a summary plan (approximately 2-3 pages in length) describing how it would leverage MBDA funds to help create a self-sustainable service model for continued services to the minority business communities beyond the three-year MBOC award period. In preparing this section of the program narrative, it is important that the applicant demonstrate its capabilities as they pertain to the MBOC work requirements and performance goals outlined in this FFO.

Attachments. The applicant must include: business and staff organization charts; original, signed commitment letters from proposed third-party, in-kind contributors; a resume setting forth the qualifications of the project director, along with an official college transcript, as appropriate; original commitment letter from the proposed project director; resumes of other key individuals who will be involved in operating the MBOC; position descriptions (together with qualification standards and salary ranges for all staff). Applicants must also provide a copy of their Articles of Incorporation, by-laws and IRS § 501(c)(3) tax-exempt letter or other evidence of non-profit status (as applicable).

2. Resources – In addition to addressing each of the sub-criteria stated in Appendix E, Section A.2, applicants should include a detailed narrative discussion of the internal and external resources (e.g., strategic partners) that are expected to be leveraged by the applicant in implementing its program. For this purpose, the applicant's non-federal cost share should be discussed as part of the program's proposed budget and not as part of the program resources. Finally, the applicant should discuss how it plans to satisfy the MBDA-required IT and computer requirements.

Attachments. The applicant should include original commitment letters from those resources listed indicating their willingness to work with the applicant. These resources can include such items as facilities, equipment, voluntary staff time and space, and financial resources. One to two letters of support (with contact information) from prior assisted larger minority firms and community organizations should be included from those resources willing to work with the applicant. The applicant should also provide a general description of its existing client base as part of its program resources.

3. Techniques and Methodologies – In addition to addressing each of the sub-criteria stated in Appendix E, Section A.3, applicants should include a detailed narrative discussion on the techniques and methodologies to be used in implementing its program, including a quarterly breakdown of the performance goals and estimated client service hours delivered to clients (by MBE annual sales range). These hours must correspond to the applicant's proposed budget. Applicants should consider the 30-day project ramp-up in preparing the quarterly breakdown of goals for the first program year. It is also requested that the applicant provide a statement as how they propose to establish a system that corresponds to or may compliment MBDA's tracking and validating contracts and financings as discussed in Appendix B. Applicants should also include a specific plan-of-action detailing how the MBOC work requirements will be met for EACH of the three (3) program years. The applicant should define how it plans to service the designated geographic area, including how the MBOC will be established and become "fully operational" within 30-days after receipt of an award (*see* Appendix A, Work and Training Requirements); the methodology for accomplishing the work requirements;



implementation of strategies with timelines; and how the applicant will integrate the work requirements with the MBOC program performance measures. It is also important that the application include information on how the applicant will integrate the MBOC program service requirements to its existing infrastructure. Applicants should develop and submit a proposed marketing plan as part of their proposal responding to this criterion. This plan should be strategic in order to maximize the number of SGI firms it will serve throughout each program year.

Attachments. The applicant must provide a staffing allocation summary for EACH program year as part of the work requirements execution plan. The staff allocation summary must be based on a project director at 100% of his/her time to the MBOC, all other staff, volunteers and interns. The applicant is encouraged to provide administrative support staff to the MBOC. Each staff role must be identified as full or part-time with the estimated hours to be worked on weekly basis. The staff allocation summary should indicate each role and the estimated client-service hours to be delivered by each. The following is an example of the staff allocation summary for the first program year:

*Example: Staff Allocation Summary - Year 1*

Role	Status	Project Allocation	Hours	Client Brokering/ Consulting Hrs & %		Admin Time Hrs & %		Other (List Here) Time Hrs & %	
Project Director	Full Time	100%	2,050	410	20%	1,025	50%	615	30%
Consultant	Full Time	100%	2,050	1,640	80%	205	10%	205	10%
Consultant	Part Time	80%	1,640	1,312	80%	164	10%	164	10%
Admin. Asst.	Full Time	100%	2,050	0	0%	2,050	100%	0	0%
Intern	Part Time	50%	1,025	103	10%	820	80%	103	10%
<b>Total</b>			<b>8,815</b>	<b>3,465</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>4,264</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>1,087</b>	<b>12%</b>

*Note: If client fees are proposed, consulting time is actual billable hours and should correspond to the budget narrative.*

4. Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative – In addition to addressing the sub-criteria stated in Appendix E, Section A.4, applicants must submit operating plans and budgets for EACH of the three (3) program years/funding periods, which are anticipated to be: (i) April 1, 2008 – March 31, 2009; (ii) April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010; and (iii) April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2011. All proposed budget items must be accompanied by a narrative explanation, on a line-item basis.

The **Federal contribution to the budget is non-negotiable.** The amount of Federal funds designated for the award (as set forth in Section II.A. of this FFO) must not be exceeded in the proposed project budget.

Costs must be proposed, on a per-event, per-person, per-item (e.g., taxi from airport to hotel) basis for all travel. In particular, each of the training events set forth in Appendix A, Work and Training Requirements, must be budgeted for, as indicated. If a venue for an event is not stated, applicants are to assume that the event will be held in Washington, D.C. Applicants may include training costs under federal and/or non-federal cost share.

Non-federal cost share must be itemized for each of the proposed program years on the SF-424A, the program line-item budget and in the budget narrative. All third-party, in-kind contributions must be supported by an original and signed commitment letter from those resources. Failure to provide this document may result in the disallowance of the amount proposed and evaluation points to be reduced.

NOTE: Applicants must provide for how client fees (if proposed) will be used to meet the non-federal cost share. Client fees must be consistent with the amount and types of clients to be served as outlined in this FFO. If proposed, client fees must be charged to all eligible clients regardless of minority group identification.

The applicant should take great care in projecting the number of hours it will serve clients. It is highly recommended that the applicant estimate the type of client it anticipates serving (by sales range). It should then break-out the type of services it may provide its clients followed by the estimated number of hours to complete tasks (i.e. consulting services, loan packaging, bid preparation assistance, etc.). These hours can then be multiplied by the client fee rate (as listed above). Individual sums should be tallied and result in a total estimate of anticipated fees billed in each program year. The number of consulting hours must match the total staff allocation summary for consulting hours. This information should be outlined for each program year and should be included in the applicant's methodology for estimating the amount of fees to be billed and to be collected.

It is also important to note that in some cases the MBOC may apply a fee waiver policy and/or accounts not collectable. If client fees are proposed, the applicant must indicate, for each program year, at what point fees are charged to its clients (e.g., upon completion of work assignment and/or successful completion of awarded transaction) and how it intends to collect fees. These items should be taken into consideration and discussed in the budget narrative.

- D. Standard Forms:** The application must contain the following Standard Forms (SF): (i) **SF-424** - Application for Federal Assistance (one for all three periods); (ii) **SF-424A**, Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs (one for each period); (iii) **SF-424B**, Assurances-Non-Construction Programs (one for all three periods); and (iv) **SF-LLL**, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable).
- E. Department of Commerce Forms:** The application must contain the following Department of Commerce (CD) forms: (i) **CD-346**, Applicant for Funding Assistance (for key individuals); and (ii) **CD-511**, Certification Regarding Lobbying.
- F. Application Submission Checklist:** The following application submission checklist is guide for applicants and should not be submitted as part of a MBOC application:

- \_\_\_ **Cover Page**
- \_\_\_ **Table of Contents**
- \_\_\_ **Program Narrative**
  - \_\_\_ **Applicant Capability**
  - \_\_\_ **Resources**
  - \_\_\_ **Techniques and Methodologies**
  - \_\_\_ **Proposed Budget (one for each program year)**
  - \_\_\_ **Proposed Budget Narrative (one for each program year)**
  - \_\_\_ **Plan of Action (for first 30 day start-up)**
  - \_\_\_ **Staff Allocation Chart**
  - \_\_\_ **Computer Network Map**
  - \_\_\_ **Original Letters of Commitment for In-Kind Contributors**
- \_\_\_ **Standard Forms**
  - \_\_\_ **SF – 424 (one to cover all three program years)**
  - \_\_\_ **SF – 424 A (one for each program year)**
  - \_\_\_ **SF – 424 B (one to cover all three program years)**
  - \_\_\_ **SF – LLL**
- \_\_\_ **Commerce Department Forms**
  - \_\_\_ **CD 346 (one for the applicant)**
  - \_\_\_ **CD 346 (one for the proposed Project Director)**
  - \_\_\_ **CD 346 (one for other key staff)**
  - \_\_\_ **CD 511**
- \_\_\_ **All pages numbered**
- \_\_\_ **All original forms signed in blue ink (if paper submission)**
- \_\_\_ **Letters of Commitment**
  - \_\_\_ **Proposed Project Director**
  - \_\_\_ **Proposed Partners**
- \_\_\_ **Letters of Support**

## APPENDIX E

### **Evaluation Criterion and Selection Procedures**

#### **A. Evaluation Criterion**

Proposals will be evaluated and applicants will be selected based on the below evaluation criterion. The maximum total number of points that an application may receive is 105, including the bonus points for exceeding the minimum required non-federal cost sharing, except when oral presentations are made by applicants. If oral presentations are made (see below: Oral Presentation - Optional), the maximum total of points that can be earned is 115. The number of points assigned to each evaluation criterion will be determined on a competitive basis by the MBDA review panel based on the quality of the application with respect to each evaluation criterion.

**Applicants are encouraged to review the MBDA Panel Evaluation Tool, which is accessible via the MBDA Business Internet Portal ([www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov)).**

#### **1. Applicant Capability (40 points)**

Proposals will be evaluated with respect to the applicant's experience and expertise in providing the work requirements listed. Specifically, proposals will be evaluated as follows:

- a) Community - Experience in and knowledge of the minority community, minority business sector, and strategies for enhancing its growth and expansion; particular emphasis shall be on expanding SGI firms. Consideration will be given as to whether the applicant has an "established presence" in the applicable MBOC geographical service area at the time of its application. For this purpose, "established presence" means that the applicant has had an office in the applicable MBOC geographical service area for at least three (3) years preceding the date of this FFO and has established working relationships with purchasing and financing organizations in such area (4 points);
- b) Business Consulting (Brokering) - Experience in and knowledge of brokering procurements and financial transactions with respect to minority firms, with an emphasis on SGI firms in the applicable MBOC geographic service area (5 points);

- c) Financing - Experience in and knowledge of the preparation and formulation of successful financial transactions, with an emphasis on the applicable geographical service area (5 points);
- d) Procurements and Contracting - Experience in and knowledge of the public and private sector contracting opportunities for minority businesses, as well as demonstrated expertise in assisting clients into supply chains (5 points);
- e) Financing Networks - Resources and professional relationships within the corporate, banking and investment community that may be beneficial to minority-owned firms (5 points);
- f) Establishment of a Self-Sustainable Service Model – Summary plan to establish a self-sustainable model for continued services to the MBE community beyond the MBDA award period (3 points);
- g) MBE Advocacy - Experience and expertise in advocating on behalf of minority communities and minority businesses, both as to specific transactions in which a minority business seeks to engage and as to broad market advocacy for the benefit of the minority community at large (3 points); and
- h) Key Staff - Assessment of the qualifications, experience and proposed role of staff that will operate the MBOC. In particular, an assessment will be made to determine whether proposed key staff possesses the expertise in utilizing information systems (*see* Appendix C, Information Technology and Computer Requirements) and the ability to successfully deliver program services (*see* Appendix A, Work and Training Requirements). At a minimum the applicant must identify a proposed project director (10 points).

## **2. Resources (20 points)**

The applicant's proposal will be evaluated as followed:

- a) Resources - Resources (not included as part of the non-federal cost share) that will be used in implementing the program, including but not limited to existing prior and/or current data lists that will serve in fostering immediate success for the MBOC (8 points);
- b) Location – Assessment of the applicant's strategic rationale for the proposed physical location of the MBOC. Applicant is encouraged to establish a location for the MBOC that is in a building which is separate and apart from any of the applicant's existing offices in the geographic service area (2 points);
- c) Partners – How the applicant plans to establish and maintain the network of strategic partners and the manner in which these partners will support the MBOC in meeting program performance goals (5 points); and

- d) Equipment – How the applicant plans to satisfy the MBOC information technology requirements, including computer hardware, software requirements and network map (*see* Appendix C, Information Technology and Computer Requirements) (5 points).

### **3. Techniques and Methodologies (20 points)**

The applicant's proposal will be evaluated as follows:

- a) Performance Measures – For each program year, the manner in which the applicant relates each performance measure to the financial information and market resources available in the applicable MBOC geographical service area (including existing client list); how the applicant will create MBOC brand recognition (marketing plan); and how the applicant will satisfy program performance goals (*see* Section I.E., Minimum Performance Goals). Particular emphasis may be placed on the manner in which the applicant matches MBOC performance goals with client service hours and how it accounts for existing market conditions in its strategy to achieve such goals (10 points);
- b) Start-up Phase – How the applicant will commence MBOC operations within the initial 30-day period. The MBOC shall have thirty (30) days to become fully operational after an award is made (*see* Appendix A, Work and Training Requirements) (3 points); and
- c) Work Requirement Execution Plan - The applicant will be evaluated on how effectively and efficiently staff time will be used to achieve the work requirements, particularly with respect to periods beyond the start-up phase. (*see* Appendix A, Work and Training Requirements) (7 points).

### **4. Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative (20 points)**

The applicant's proposal will be evaluated as follows:

- a) Reasonableness, Allowability and Allocability of Proposed Program Costs. All of the proposed program costs expenditures should be discussed and the budget line-item narrative must match the proposed budget. Fringe benefits and other percentage item calculations should match the proposed budget line-item and narrative (5 points);
- b) Non-Federal Cost Share. The required 20% non-Federal share must be adequately addressed and properly documented, including but not limited to how client fees (if proposed) will be used by the applicant in meeting the non-federal cost-share (*see* Section III.B., Non-Federal Cost Sharing Requirements) (5 points); and

- c) Performance-Based Budgeting. The extent to which the line-item budget and budget narrative relate to the accomplishment of the MBOC work requirements and performance measures (*i.e.*, performance-based budgeting) (10 points).

Bonus for Non-Federal Cost Sharing (maximum of 5 points): Non-federal cost sharing of at least 20% is required under the MBOC Program. Non-federal cost sharing is the portion of the total project cost not borne by the Federal Government and may be met by the applicant in any one or more of the following four means (or a combination thereof): (1) client fees; (2) cash contributions; (3) non-cash applicant contributions; or, (4) third party in-kind contributions. *See* Section III.B., Non-Federal Cost Sharing Requirements.

Proposals with non-federal cost sharing exceeding 20% of the total project costs will be awarded bonus points on the following scale: more than 20% - less than 25% = 1 point; 25% or more - less than 30% = 2 points; 30% or more - less than 35% = 3 points; 35% or more - less than 40% = 4 points; and 40% or more = 5 points.

## **5. Oral Presentation - Optional (10 points)**

Oral presentations are optional and held only when requested by MBDA. This action may be initiated for the top two (2) ranked applications for each project and will be applied on a consistent basis for each project competition. Oral presentations will be used to establish a final evaluation and ranking.

The applicant's presentation will be evaluated as to the extent to which the presentation demonstrates:

- a) How the applicant will effectively and efficiently assist MBDA in the accomplishment of its mission (2 points);
- b) Business operating priorities designed to manage a successful MBOC (2 points);
- c) A management philosophy that achieves an effective balance between micromanagement and complete autonomy for its Project Director (2 points);
- d) Robust search criteria for the identification of a Project Director (1 point);
- e) Effective employee recruitment and retention policies and procedures (1 point); and
- f) A competitive and innovative approach to exceeding performance requirements (2 points).

## **B. Review and Selection Process**

### **1. Initial Screening**

Prior to the formal paneling process, each application will receive an initial screening to ensure that all required forms, signatures and documentation are present. An application will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated by the review panel if it is received after the closing date for receipt of applications, the applicant fails to submit an original, signed Form SF-424 by the application closing date (paper applications only), or the application does not provide for the operation of a MBOC. Other application deficiencies may be accounted for through point deductions during panel review.

## **2. Panel Review**

Each application will receive an independent, objective review by a panel qualified to evaluate the applications submitted. The review panel will consist of at least 3 persons, all of whom will be full-time federal employees and at least one of whom will be an MBDA employee, who will review the applications for a specified project based on the above evaluation criterion. Each reviewer shall evaluate and provide a score for each proposal. Each project review panel (through the panel Chairperson) shall provide the MBDA National Director (Recommending Official) with a ranking of the applications based on the average of the reviewers' scores and shall also provide a recommendation regarding funding of the highest scoring application.

## **3. Oral Presentation - Upon MBDA Request**

MBDA may invite the two (2) top-ranked applicants for each project competition to develop and provide an oral presentation. If an oral presentation is requested, the affected applicants will receive a formal communication (via standard mail, e-mail or fax) from MBDA indicating the time and date for the presentation. In-person presentations are not mandatory but are encouraged; telephonic presentations are acceptable. Applicants will be asked to submit a PowerPoint presentation (or equivalent) to MBDA that addresses the oral presentation criteria set forth above. The presentation must be submitted at least 24 hours before the scheduled date and time of the presentation. The presentation will be made to the MBDA National Director (or his/her designee) and up to three senior MBDA staff who did not serve on the original review panel. The oral panel members may ask follow-up questions after the presentation. MBDA will provide the teleconference dial-in number and pass code. Each applicant will present to MBDA staff only; competitors are not permitted to listen (and/or watch) other presentations.

All costs pertaining to this presentation shall be borne by the applicant. MBOC award funds may not be used as a reimbursement for this presentation. MBDA will not accept any requests or petitions for reimbursement.

The oral panel members shall score each presentation in accordance with the oral presentation criterion provided above. An average score shall be compiled and added to the score of the original panel review.

## **4. Final Recommendation**



The MBDA National Director makes the final recommendation to the Grants Officer regarding the funding of applications under this competitive solicitation. MBDA expects to recommend for funding the highest ranking application for each project, as evaluated and recommended by the review panel and taking into account oral presentations (as applicable). However, the MBDA National Director may not make any selection, or he may select an application out of rank order for the following reasons:

- (a) A determination that an application better addresses one or more of the funding priorities set forth in Section I.G. of this FFO. The National Director (or his/her designee) reserves the right to conduct one or more site visits (subject to the availability of funding), in order to make a better assessment of an applicant's capability to achieve the funding priorities; or
- b) The availability of MBDA funding.

Prior to making a final recommendation to the Grants Officer, MBDA may request that the apparent winner of the competition provide written clarifications (as necessary) regarding its application.